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1. ISRAELIS ROUTE SHIPPING TO TEST PASSAGE OF
SUEZ AND AQABA

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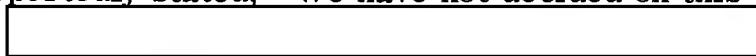
The American embassy in Tel Aviv reports that the Israeli government apparently has decided to route merchant shipping under Israeli charter through the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Aqaba in the near future. The well-informed Jerusalem Post stated on 8 March that the "highest authority in the government" has ordered the Commerce Ministry to re-route the Danish freighter Brigitte Toft from South Africa to Eilat via the Tiran Straits instead of to Haifa.

According to another Israeli press statement, the government will attempt "next month" to send another merchant vessel from Haifa to Burma via the Suez Canal.

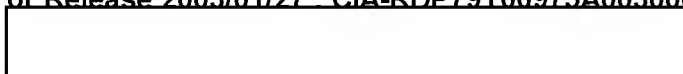
Comment

According to a press statement ascribed to an Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman, the Brigitte Toft is scheduled to arrive at Eilat about 20 March. The attempt to send this vessel through the Tiran Straits would be in line with Israeli foreign minister Meir's statement to the UN secretary general on 5 March that Israel would exercise "next week" its right to navigate the gulf freely.

Egyptian press and government spokesmen have insisted that the Suez Canal is still barred to Israeli shipping, but President Nasr, in an interview on 9 March, reportedly stated, "We have not decided on this issue yet."



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3. HUNGARIAN REGIME ARRESTING THOUSANDS TO
FORESTALL POSSIBLE 15 MARCH REVOLT

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The American legation in Budapest reported on 8 March that, during the last few days, thousands, and perhaps tens of thousands, of Hungarians have been arrested in order to reduce the likelihood of serious trouble on 15 March, a Hungarian national holiday. It is rumored that old concentration camps are being reopened to hold the prison overflow.

The legation notes that the pattern of arrests indicates that the regime plans to arrest virtually all potential troublemakers. Some of those arrested might be held until after 4 April.

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5. POWERFUL ARGENTINE NAVAL OFFICIAL ARRESTED

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The 30-day "disciplinary" arrest of Rear Admiral Arturo Rial, the powerful under secretary of the navy, reflects a new intensity in the differences over political and economic issues among top military leaders, whose unity is the key factor in Argentine stability. Rial, the first important navy official to be arrested, has many supporters among top commanders in all branches of the armed forces. According to a press report of 10 March, a group of naval officers has demanded that the arrest be deferred.

The official reason given for Rial's arrest was his failure to safeguard confidential correspondence to President Aramburu--a reference to five reportedly critical letters published this week by an opposition political organ. Aramburu's willingness to arrest so important a figure suggests that differences among the ruling military factions are sharper than he had previously been willing to admit.

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